



# Focus on **CONTINUING EDUCATION** **FOR LICENSED WELL OPERATORS**

For Well Operators

Water Resources Program

## **For more information:**

Online visit:  
[www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wrhome.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wrhome.html)  
— click on wells

To leave a recorded message, call  
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**Washington well drillers are required to gain continuing education when applying for a new well operator license or renewing an existing one.**

Well operators need approved Continuing Education Units (CEUs) when applying for, or renewing, a well operators license in Washington State. Participation in continuing education allows drillers to stay informed of industry changes and technological advances. Combining field experience with classroom work enhances a driller's knowledge, skills and abilities.

*A CEU is defined as one unit, approved by Ecology, for time spent in classroom, workshop or seminar training. An applicant or licensed driller must gain a minimum number of CEUs to obtain or renew a well operator's license.*

## **How CEUs are approved**

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) assigns units to training courses based on a recommendation from the Technical Advisory Group. Ecology maintains a list of approved courses which is available online or can be requested by calling the 1-800 line (see sidebar). The number of units given to a course depends on several factors. These include the difficulty of the subject, the qualifications of the instructor, and how closely the course agenda relates to the drilling profession.

Applicants and licensed well drillers should know how many CEUs are required, and plan to take as many classes as necessary to obtain or renew a well operator license.

*A driller cannot “carry over” credits from one license renewal period to another.*

## **Locating a training course to fit a driller's needs and schedule**

Training courses should relate to occupational health and safety; business and office skills; interpersonal skills; technical aspects of the drilling industry; or other subjects as approved by Ecology. A driller can look for training from members of professional associations, government agencies, private businesses, or individuals. Correspondence courses may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Ecology can provide a list of training courses that have already received CEU approval, but a driller is not limited to taking the courses that are on this list. Look for training opportunities in trade magazines, training flyers or brochures, advertisements in newspapers or mail, and courses offered at universities.



## **Requesting approval of a training course**

Pre-approval of courses prior to the course date is recommended. This will ensure an accurate count of units assigned. A driller can take the course first and then ask for CEU approval, but there is no guarantee that the course will be approved or how many CEUs will be assigned.

There is a form for drillers to use when asking Ecology to evaluate a course they wish to attend. A driller is asked to provide information on the course content, instructors, and course length.

An instructor may also ask for Ecology's approval prior to the course. It would be useful to publicize that information when advertising the course. There is also a form for a provider to use when making this request. Forms can be requested by calling the 1-800 number listed on page 1.

## **Maintaining your training records**

It is the responsibility of the licensed operator to keep track of continuing education classes taken. Proof of attendance may include copies of first aid/cpr cards, OSHA hazmat cards, certificates, or agendas with sign off by instructors. Licensed drillers must provide these proof documents at the time of application for a license or renewal of a license.

*Ecology has also developed a tracking database for continuing education for licensed drillers only. CEUs may be added as classes are taken by submitting approved forms of proof of attendance. If proof of continuing education is sent at the time classes are taken and Ecology has this proof on file, no further documentation will be needed when a license is renewed.*

## **Summary of important points**

1. Confirm the number of CEUs needed, and look for courses that enhance drilling knowledge and professional skills.
2. Obtain prior approval of course work whenever possible.
3. Maintain records of approved training courses. Drillers will need to show documentation of course work when applying for a drilling license, or applying for renewal of a drilling license. Examples of documentation include certificates of completion, transcripts, attendance rosters, and diplomas.